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Another guess at Nunn's motives for challenging Clinton are less critical — that Nunn is simply being a senator, and a good one — protective of his turf, more

Clinton," said one former Democratic Senate aide who long dealt directly with Nunn on military issues. "I think there are still fingerprints on the president's face from being slapped around."

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Jerilee Bennett/Gazette Telegraph

Weldon Walker, owner of the Penthouse Lounge and an Air Force officer for 12 years, is shown with his uniform and diploma from the Air Force Academy. Walker agrees with President Clinton's move to lift the ban on homosexuals in the military. He says most of the gays that are serving in the military won't be rushing out of the closet after the ban is lifted.

Local gay veteran blasts ban

By **Louis Aguilar**
Gazette Telegraph

Weldon Walker, an Air Force officer for 12 years, recalls the countless times he was surrounded by nude heterosexual men in the shower.

"I never felt any excitement," he said. "I certainly didn't leer at anyone. Why would I? I'm looking for someone who will return my affection."

Walker is a gay man and proud of it. He's also a military veteran and proud of it. Why those two parts of his life should conflict is a mystery to him.

President Clinton's proposal to lift the ban on gays serving in the military is long overdue, said the 37-year-old owner of the Penthouse Lounge in Colorado Springs.

"All it would do is allow gay and lesbian officers and enlisted personnel to do their jobs without the fear (that) they would be persecuted if people found out who they are," he said.

"The center of the argument is whether someone should be judged on their performance, just like everyone else is in the military."

The arguments he's heard on why the ban on gays in the military should remain in effect are based on "myths and half-truths," he said.

A higher risk of AIDS?

"It's not a disease that hits only homosexuals," he responds. "You also get checked for AIDS before you officially get accepted in the military and then are checked every six months."

The fear of homosexuals making advances toward heterosexuals seems irrational as well, he said.

"We are talking about the military, which has strict codes of discipline. Install those rules and people follow them. That is why you are in the military," he said. "I don't know any gay people who go after straight people. They don't need the frustration of being rejected."

Walker, a 1977 graduate of the Air Force Academy, says he knows up to 60 homosexuals still in the military and that "none of them would run out of the closet." Many he said would wait until they see how the military reacts.

"Maybe some day, but not soon, I just can't see going to the officers' club and see men dancing together. Most understand that it would take a while for people to accept them.

"You have to understand we are talking about people who want to be in the military and enjoy that lifestyle, just as I did. Sooner or later, most people will realize that we have a lot more in common than differences," he said.

INSIDE WASHINGTON

Associated Press

Joann Mapp, a Philadelphia data processing clerk, and other people shared stories with President Clinton and Vice President Al Gore in a conference call Friday from the Oval Office about family emergencies that forced them to seek time off from work.

Clinton, Gore chat with families about very painful choices

By **Nancy Benac**/Associated Press

With babies squealing in the background, President Clinton and 11 American families held a cross-country chat Friday about the difficulties of getting time off from work for family emergencies.

Clinton's conference call from the Oval Office — he was joined by Vice President Al Gore — was designed to showcase legislation that would require employers to give their workers unpaid leave to care for a newborn or a sick relative.

One by one, they recounted experiences in which the hardships of family illness were compounded by their employers' refusal to give them time off.

Many lost jobs to stay home with sick children; several lost homes. One woman had to quit her job to take care of an adopted newborn. One man was fired when he needed time off to help his wife care for triplets born three months prematurely.

James Callor of Helper, Utah, found out in 1982 that his 4-year-old daughter had cancer. When his daughter was given just a few weeks to live, Callor asked for and was denied leave from his job at a mining company. His daughter died three weeks later.

"I didn't lose my job but I lost my little girl," he told Clinton.

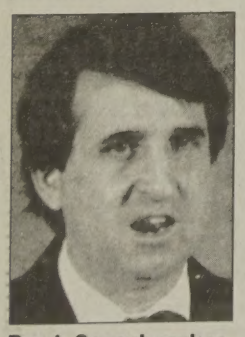
Eva Skubel, of Moodus, Conn., said her family was left without income or health benefits when her husband, Michael, lost his job when he needed time off to care for a daughter with a rare brain disease at the same time his wife was pregnant.

"When you have to choose between your job and your family you must go with your family," she said.

Family leave legislation is on a fast track for congressional approval after being vetoed last year by former President George Bush, who argued it would impose an undue burden on businesses. It would require employers to give workers up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a newborn or a sick relative. Companies with fewer than 50 workers would be exempt.

POLITICS

Departing GOP chairman warns against zealotry: In a repudiation of his party's performance at the Republican National Convention in August, the departing chairman appealed to Republicans on Friday in St. Louis to end their divisiveness as well as their adamant opposition to abortion rights and "not cling to zealotry masquerading as principle."



Bond: Speech makes parting waves.

The address by the chairman, Richard Bond, startled many Republicans at a meeting in which they elected Haley Barbour as their new chairman. Barbour, a lawyer and native of Yazoo City, Miss., was elected on the third ballot after the most hard-fought race for chairman since 1977.

Bond's tone contrasted with his comments during the Republican convention, which was attacked for helping drive out mainstream party members. Friday, he called for unity, saying: "America is getting more diverse — not more alike. And our job is to recognize this change and offer platforms and candidates and policies that reflect changing times."

It was at the convention that Bond, 42, said, "We are America; these other people are not America."

On Friday, he declared: "Our job is to win elections, not cling to intolerances that zealots call principles — not to be led or dominated by a vocal few who like to look good losing."

The vote on the national committee was 90 votes for Barbour, 57 for Spencer Abraham, co-chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee, and 18 for Howard "Bo" Callaway, a former Army secretary, congressman and Colorado GOP state chairman. The other two candidates were former Gov. John Ashcroft of Missouri and Craig Berkman, chairman of the Oregon Republican Party.

ALSO . . .

■ The U.S. Court of Appeals ruled Friday that the Pentagon may question its civilian workers about past arrests, use of

NATION

Marshall viewed RFK as 'cold'

1977 interviews released to public

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Thurgood Marshall called Robert F. Kennedy "a cold calculating character" and said Martin Luther King was a great leader but "wasn't worth diddley squat" as an organizer, according to taped interviews.

Transcripts of the four tapes, recorded in 1977 by Columbia University's Oral History Project, were released Monday, the day after the former Supreme Court justice died at age 84. He was buried Friday at Arlington National Cemetery.

While he speaks fondly of King, Marshall, the first black Supreme Court justice, says King had good and bad points.

"I thought he was great as a leader," Marshall said. "As an organizer, he wasn't worth diddley squat. But very few leaders are."

Marshall called the late President John F. Kennedy "a very sweet man," but said of Robert Kennedy: "Bobby was like his father. He was a cold calculating character. 'What's in it for me?' I mean, not like his brother. He had no warm feelings. None at all."

Marshall praises former President Lyndon Johnson who once told him: "'I am going to make Abraham Lincoln look like a piker.'"

"I think if he'd been re-elected, he'd have been still alive today," Marshall said four years after Johnson's death. "He died of a broken heart. What a lovely guy."

One of his angriest encounters was with Gen. Douglas MacArthur in 1950 in Korea, where Marshall was representing some black soldiers who had been arrested.

"I questioned him about the continuation of segregation in the Army, and he said he was working on it. And I asked him how many years he'd been working on it. And he said he didn't really remember how many.

"He said that he didn't find the Negroes qualified, and when he found them qualified, they would be integrated. Well, we didn't part that friendly."

Bank robber, hostage killed in shootout

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Robbers who used guns and fake bombs to hold up a bank Friday were foiled when a witness stopped a passing patrol car. After trading shots with an officer, one of the robbers took a hostage while fleeing along busy streets, and both were killed in another shootout.

Two police officers were shot and injured and a third was hospitalized with emotional trauma, hospital officials said. All three were in stable condition.

It wasn't known whose bullet struck the hostage, a 37-year-old woman, police Commissioner Raymond Kelly said.

Two surviving suspects were arrested in a nearby alley two hours after the holdup, Kelly said. The stolen money was recovered, along with masks and two 9 mm guns. He said police were investigating whether there was a fourth robber.

The robbers were believed to be responsible for 10 previous bank jobs, Kelly said.

The armed men entered a Chemical Bank branch about 10

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